

Men over 40, it's light blue ribbon month |

Opinion

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September is light blue ribbon month, also known as Prostate Cancer Awareness month

It's a time to recognize a disease that will cause the death of an estimated 30,000 men this year, one that affects one in nine men here in the U.S.

African-American men are impacted in even greater numbers. One in six African-American men will develop prostate cancer in his lifetime, which is almost double the rate of white males. African-American men are 2.3 times more likely to die from the disease.

Prostate cancer is the second most common cancer diagnosed in men. It's urgent that we address and raise awareness for the severity of this disease.

As a medical oncologist at West Cancer Center, one of my areas of clinical expertise is genitourinary cancers, which include cancers of the urinary tract and male reproductive system.

We are at the forefront of men's health in our region. With such harsh statistics surrounding prostate cancer, we have made addressing this disease one of our top initiatives.

Our extensive team of oncology experts at West urge all men to talk to their doctors about their risk for developing prostate cancer, symptoms, and early detection testing procedures that are available.

Men 65 and older are at the highest risk for the disease, but men over the age of 40 should start talking to their doctors to get the facts. Diagnosing prostate cancer at an early stage gives patients the best chance for effective treatment and to ultimately live cancer free.

Patient outcomes can be positively impacted by improved awareness of the disease, an understanding of increased risks for developing it, and access to recent medical advances that can extend the time a patient lives without his cancer spreading.

It's also important that we put a focus on more research to find more advanced and effective treatments for the disease.

Early detection is key, so there is no better time to talk to your physician and learn more about prostate cancer and its possible impact on you or your family.

If you have been diagnosed with prostate cancer, you should talk to your doctor to learn more about the disease and your treatment options including clinical trial opportunities, genetic testing information, and treatment plans.

Your doctor can also help you find support groups and services either in your community or online. If you haven't done so already, it's time. Take control of your own health.

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